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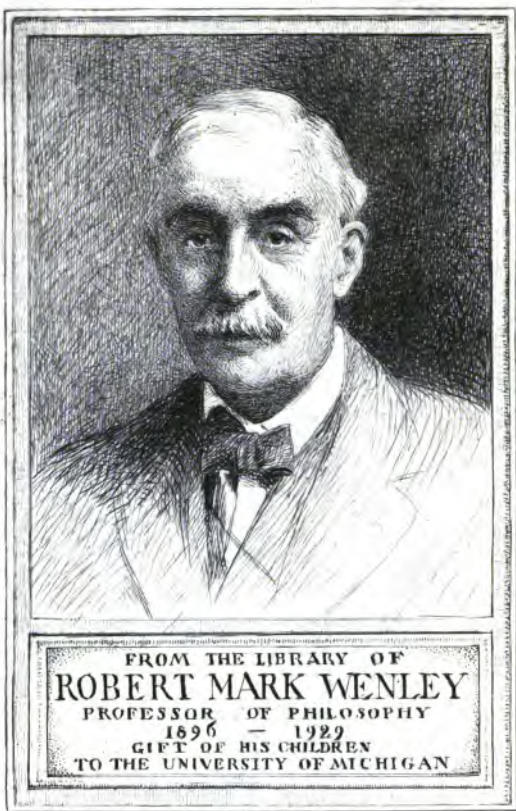
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THESIS.

THE HITTITES AND THE BIBLE.

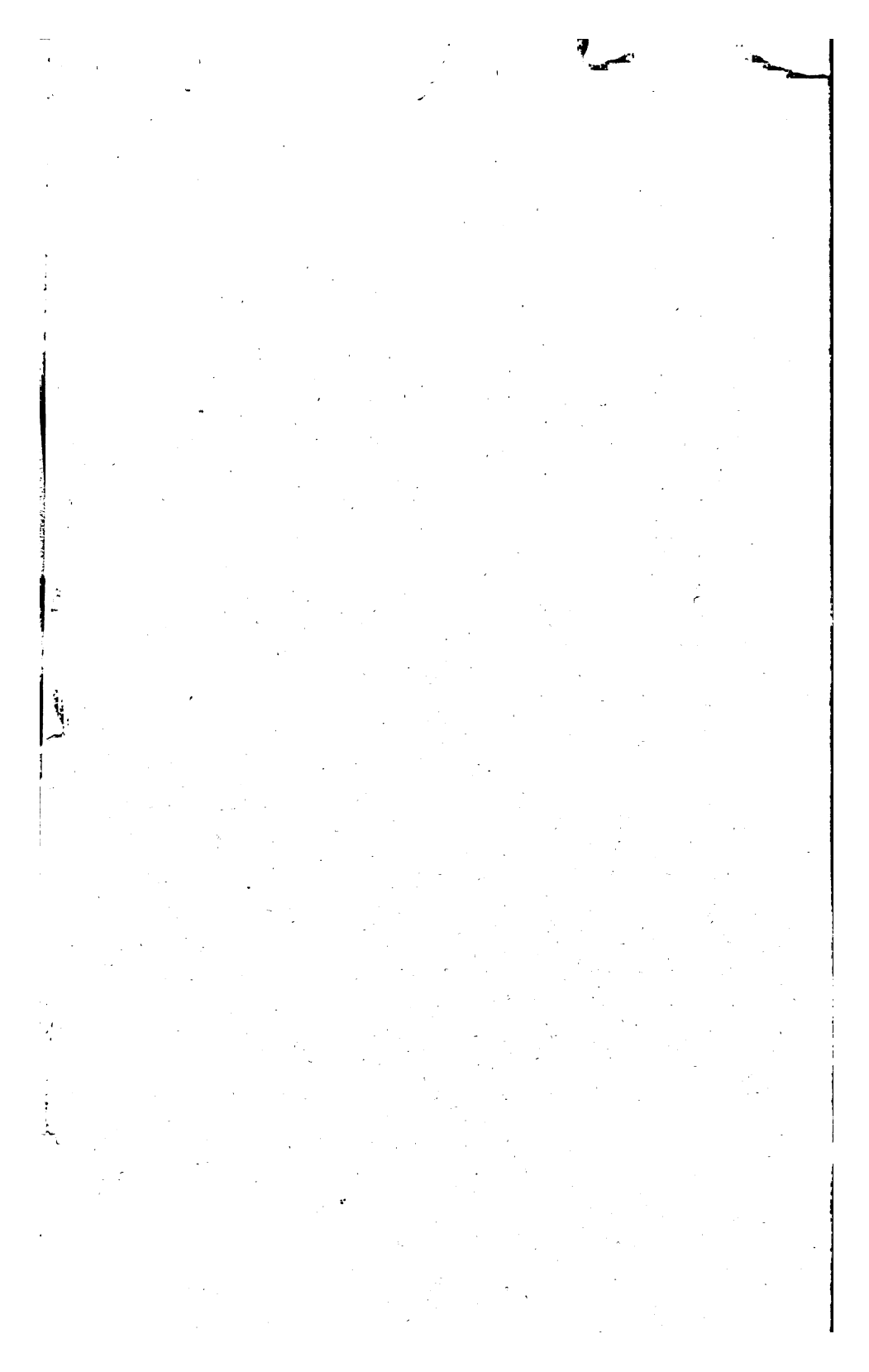
BY THE

REV. W. WRIGHT, B.A.

(Formerly of Damascus),

EDITORIAL SUPERINTENDENT OF THE BRITISH AND FOREIGN
BIBLE SOCIETY, AND MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL OF
THE BIBLICAL ARCHEOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

LONDON: 1882.



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THE HITTITES AND THE BIBLE.

My thesis is that the statements of the Bible with reference to the Hittites are fully confirmed by the cumulative evidence of modern discovery, and I shall endeavour to show that the light of the nineteenth century A.D. reveals the existence of a Hittite power in the nineteenth century B.C., and enables us to follow the fortunes of that power down to 717 B.C., when the Hittite empire was finally crushed on the fatal field of Carchemish. I hope not only to prove the Bible true by contemporary and corroborative evidence, but also to show that a great empire, forgotten by ancient and modern historians, must be restored to the ancient kingdoms of the world. By confirming the Bible we shall discover a lost empire.

It is desirable that this investigation should be undertaken, because the casual references to the Hittites in the Bible have been used by the enemies of Divine revelation to discredit the historical accuracy of the book, and some of the weak friends of the Bible have begun to propagate doubt where they cannot disprove.

In 1857 Professor F. W. Newman, fellow of Balliol College, Oxford, in his 'History of the Hebrew Monarchy,' * speaks of the Bible references to the Hittites as 'unhistorical,' and as 'not exhibiting the writer's acquaintance with the times in a very favourable light,' and the Rev. T. K. Cheyne, Fellow of the same college, writing on the Hittites, in the 'Encyclopædia Britannica,' † last year, treats the Bible statements regarding the Hittites as unhistorical and unworthy of credence. Referring to the mention of the Hittites in the Book of Genesis, he says, 'The lists of these pre-Israelitish populations cannot be taken as strictly historical documents,' 'they cannot be taken as of equal authority with Egyptian and Assyrian inscriptions;' and, carrying out his comparison, he adds, 'Not less unfavourable to the accuracy of the Old Testament references to the Hittites is the evidence deducible

* Pp. 178, 179.

† Vol. xii.

from proper names.* I shall examine these references to the Bible in the light of Egyptian and Assyrian inscriptions when I come to the passages referred to. It is enough here to draw attention to the manner and progress of unbelief. Professor Newman discredits what he does not understand, and Mr. Cheyne, mistaking the arrogance of scepticism for disproved facts, accepts his predecessor's conclusions, and gives them the wider currency of his own credit.

The Egyptian inscriptions are much occupied with a great and warlike people called the Khita, the centre of whose power lay north of Syria, in the region of the Orontes and upper Euphrates. These are called in the Assyrian inscriptions Khatti, and may be identified with the Hittites of the Bible, the radical letters of the name in each language being the same.†

In 1872 I was able to send plaster casts to England of curious inscriptions which had been noticed in Hamath by Burckhardt in 1812. Along with these I sent a memorandum which was printed in the 'Quarterly Statement of the Palestine Exploration Fund,'‡ and a detailed statement, which appeared in 'The British and Foreign Evangelical Review,'§ giving my reasons for believing that the curious inscriptions were nothing less than Hittite remains. My theory has since received many confirmations, and is now very generally accepted by Oriental scholars. Vigorous explorations have brought to light similar inscriptions throughout an extended region north of Syria, and at the present moment able and painstaking scholars are eagerly engaged in tracing, among the arrowy records of Assyria, and the

* The insinuation in this passage clearly is that the Bible assumed, by the use of Semitic names, that the Hittites were of Semitic origin. Mr. Cheyne mentions Ephron, Ahimelech, and Uriah, and he asks, 'Is it unnatural to infer that these three names are no less fictitious than the Semitic names ascribed in the Old Testament to the non-Semitic Philistines?' The Bible is therefore wrong, and the names—Hittite and Philistine—are fictitious. But what saith the Bible itself? It says without any reservation that the Hittites were Canaanites (Gen. x. 15). 'And Canaan begat Sidon his firstborn, and Heth.' It must be borne in mind that Oriental names are to a large extent *significates*. Men receive names according to some personal peculiarity or striking circumstances. I knew a youth in Syria called 'the father of two blue eyes' until he grew up, and then he was called 'the father of a red beard.' My landlord in Damascus was called 'the father of a nose,' Moses was his name, and in my house his *sobriquet* was translated into 'Mozambique.' With a Semitic people there was nothing more natural than that a Hittite, with an unpronounceable name, on attaching himself to King David when an outlaw, should be called Ahimelech, the brother, or friend, of the king.

† Mr. Gladstone identifies the *Keteioi* of Homer, Od. xi. 521, with the Hittites. 'Homeric Synchronism,' pp. 174, 182.

‡ April, 1873.

§ January, 1874.

hieroglyphics of Egypt, the long lost history of the Hittite people.

In supporting my thesis I shall first summarize the Bible references to the Hittites.

Then I shall examine these Bible references in the light of the recently read inscriptions of Egypt and Assyria.

And, lastly, I shall refer more fully to the recently discovered Hittite remains.

I. BIBLE REFERENCES TO THE HITTITES.

We find the Hittites among the settled inhabitants of Canaan while as yet Abraham was only a wandering sheikh. By peaceful pastoral pursuits, and by skill and valour in war, Abraham had attained to a high position of wealth and influence. He finds himself, however, in the land of the stranger, with no sons to support or succeed him, and the only heir to his wealth and fame Eliezer, a Damascene, and when, in presence of the uncertain future, he begins to despond, the Lord appears to him and renews his former promises, and in addition makes with him a new covenant, that his own children shall possess the land then occupied by the Hittites and other heathen tribes, from the river of Egypt to the river Euphrates (Gen. xv. 20).*

Fifty years later Abraham secures his first possession in Canaan by purchasing a grave for Sarah from the sons of Heth. The Hittites are in possession and power at Hebron, and Abraham, as he stands up before them, declares himself 'a stranger and a sojourner' (Gen. xxiii. 4). The Hittites call Abraham a mighty prince, and, in the phrases and customs stereotyped in Syria to this day, sell to the patriarch the field with the cave of Machpelah.

'The stranger and sojourner' purchased his field from the Hittites of Hebron, secured his title, and buried his wife in the cave where, nearly forty years later, Isaac and Ishmael laid his own body by the side of his faithful companion,† 'in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron the son of Zohar the Hittite' (Gen. xxv. 9).

The family of the patriarch, and the Hittite people, continued to live side by side in the land, and Esau, the grandson of Abraham, took to wife several Hittite women, who were a bitterness of spirit to Isaac and Rebekah (Gen. xxvi. 35.)

During the weary years spent in Egypt the discouraged

* This event is placed by Usher 1913 B.C. I do not, however, rest any part of my case on the accuracy of any system of chronology, sacred or secular. I simply take the common dates as useful approximations more or less correct.

† 1822 B.C.

Israelites were often cheered by the renewed promise of a return to the land of the Hittites. From the bush on Horeb the Lord declared to Moses that he had heard the cry of the Israelites, and had come down to deliver them from their taskmasters, and to bring them 'unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites' (Exod. iii. 8), thus enumerating the nations then in possession of the promised land. The Canaanites doubtless included all the Hamite races of the land, and the Hittites stand generally first in order and first in importance of the sub-tribes. Later the Lord not only promised to send his angel to lead them to the land of the Hittites, but He declared that He would send before them hornets to drive out the Hittites before them (Exod. xxiii. 28).

On their return to Moses, the spies described in a general way the regions occupied by the different peoples (Numb. xiii. 29). 'The Amalekites,' they said, 'dwell in the land of the south; and the Hittites, and the Jebusites, and the Amorites, dwell in the mountains; and the Canaanites dwell by the sea and by the coast of Jordan.' After the death of Moses, the Israelitish host, having received many commands to utterly destroy the Hittites, reach the border of the promised land, ready, with Joshua as their leader, to cross the Jordan. Then the Lord spake unto Joshua, assuring him of the fulfilment of former promises, and defining the limits of the land of promise viewed from the speaker's standpoint: 'From the wilderness and this Lebanon even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your coast' (Josh. i. 4).

The Israelites crossed the Jordan, and in the taking of Jericho (Josh. xxiv. 11) first met the Hittites with the Amorites. In the various confederacies formed against the invaders (Josh. ix. 1) the Hittites seem to have taken a part; but especially in the battle by lake Merom, we recognize the Hittite allies of Jabin by the multitude of their horses and chariots (Josh. xi. 8). The Hittite power in Palestine was crushed, but some of the people continued to dwell in the land (Judg. iii. 5), and the Israelites dwelt among them, and intermarried with them, and served their gods. King David had among his mighty men Hittite warriors, and Bathsheba, the mother of Solomon, and ancestress of our Lord, was the wife of Uriah the Hittite. Solomon also had among his foreign wives women of the Hittites (1 Kings xi. 1), and he caused the people of the Hittites to pay tribute. When King David went

to establish his frontier on the Euphrates, he took from King Hadadezer a thousand chariots, and seven hundred horsemen, and twenty thousand footmen; and Toi king of Hamath sent to him vessels of silver and gold (2 Sam. viii.)

The Hittites, however, must have enjoyed an independent national existence, for in the time of Solomon horses and chariots were brought up out of Egypt for the kings of the Hittites (1 Kings x. 29), and the very price is given. In later years the Syrians fled panic-stricken from the siege of Samaria, on hearing what they supposed a noise of chariots and horses. They said, 'the king of Israel hath hired against us the kings of the Hittites . . . wherefore they arose and fled in the twilight' (2 Kings vii. 6).

We have thus summarized the chief Bible references to the Hittites during a period of a thousand years. We now turn to the contemporary records of Assyria and Egypt to see what light they throw on these records.

II. THE BIBLE REFERENCES TO THE HITTITES IN THE LIGHT OF THE INSCRIPTIONS OF ASSYRIA AND EGYPT.

The labours of a few men in recent years have drawn floods of historic light from the long silent records of Egypt and Assyria; and the nineteenth century before Christ is yielding up its secrets to the nineteenth century of our era. At that early period the Hittites are recognized among existing peoples. 'In the astrological tablets,' says Mr. Sayce, 'compiled for the library of Sargon of Aganè (about B.C. 1900) the Hittites are already spoken of as formidable rivals of the Babylonians in the north-west, at a time when the kingdom of Assyria did not exist.*' The astrological tablets were seventy-two in number, and chronicled events in relation to omens.† They are chiefly later editions from the libraries of Babylonian kings before the sixteenth century B.C. Thus we meet the Hittites, for the first time in the national history of Babylon, just about the time, according to Usher's chronology, when they are mentioned as a people in the Book of Genesis (xv. 20). The divine promise, in which Abraham's posterity receives the land of the Hittites, points to a people stretching to the river Euphrates—'unto the great river, the river Euphrates'—and the Babylonian records, read in our day for the first time in two millenniums, point to the Hittites firmly established in the neighbourhood of Carchemish 1900 B.C., and show that they had already adopted

* Transactions of Society of Biblical Archæology, vol. vii. part 2.

† Records of the Past, vol. i. 151.

the elements of Babylonian art and civilization. The two chief cities of the Hittites were Kadesh on the Orontes, the modern Tell Mendeh, and Carchemish on the upper Euphrates, now called Jerabis, and between these two cities lies the region from south of Hamath unto the great river Euphrates. Surely such a marvellous coincidence as this between the Bible and the Babylonian inscriptions, with reference to events on the very outer horizon of history, should compel any candid scholar to accord the same credence at least to the Book of Genesis as to the tablets of Sargon. The Rev. T. K. Cheyne, however, referring to the Bible statements regarding the Hittites, declares they 'cannot be taken as of equal authority with Egyptian and Assyrian inscriptions.'* Yet we find the Assyrian chronology by Professor Sayce, and the Bible chronology by Usher, practically agreeing as to a state of facts over 3780 years ago. If the tablets of Sargon are correct in this instance, the Tôrâh of Moses must also be correct. If the king of Aganè's astrological records are strictly historical, the statement in the Pentateuch must also be strictly historical. Those who accept the record of this inscription must also accept the record of the Bible.

Half a century later the Bible reveals to us Abraham engaged in purchasing a burial-place from a Hittite people in the south of Palestine. The whole account is so true to Oriental ways that we should not have paused to draw attention to this passage had not the Rev. T. K. Cheyne used it as a proof of his assertion that the narrative of the Bible 'cannot be taken as of equal authority with Egyptian and Assyrian inscriptions.'† 'How meagre,' he says, 'the tradition respecting the Hittites was in the time of the great Elohistic narrator is shown by the picture of Hittite life in Genesis xxiii.' But is there anything contrary to universal experience in a great people stretching out branches on different sides? The Phœnicians, the Greeks, the Romans, the Spaniards, the Dutch, the English have all sent out colonists on the lines of their commerce. The Hittites drew most important resources from Egypt, and it would have been contrary to all experience had Hittite merchants not been found in the direction of Egypt. It would also be contrary to common experience if we found a strong warlike people firmly established in northern Syria and not

* *Encyclopædia Britannica*, vol. xii.

† In his article on the Canaanites, he says of the Bible record: 'The Hittites seem to have been included among the Canaanites by mistake. Historical evidence, both Biblical and extra-Biblical, prove convincingly that they dwelt beyond the borders of Canaan.'

sending forth in half a century peaceful colonists towards southern Palestine. Mr. Cheyne, referring to this amicable transaction, says, 'the undoubted authentic inscriptions of Egypt and Assyria reveal the Hittites in far different guise, as pre-eminently a warlike conquering race.' No doubt the inscriptions of Egypt and Assyria represent the Hittites for the most part in the attitude of war, but the inscriptions are at best meagre, and in great part pictorial representations of campaigns and victories executed in honour of the victors. No one, however, who reflects will infer that because the Hittites appear among the pictorial representations of campaigns as pre-eminently warlike, that therefore a Hittite colony was incapable of a simple business transaction. Many of our own English histories are little more than a record of wars and victories, and yet the English people might be discovered in as peaceful transactions sometimes during half a century as that which took place between Abraham and Ephron the Hittite. The German nation was a terrible instrument of war a few years ago, and yet the Germans are industrious at home, and enormous numbers of them are now flying away to peaceful pursuits in other lands. The Turks are 'pre-eminently a warlike race,' and yet the writer of this thesis had once some peaceful transactions with them in regard to the making more secure a Christian cemetery in the fanatical city of Damascus.

Not only is the transaction between Abraham and the Hittites at Hebron so entirely in accord with general experience and local usage as to require no collateral corroboration, but there seems to be some evidence from Egyptian inscriptions as to the existence of the Hittites on the borders of Egypt at a very remote period. A stone now in the Louvre, of the time of Amenemhat, of the twelfth dynasty, contains an inscription which refers to the overthrow of Hittite palaces in that region; and Brugsch Bey, referring to the record of the Hittites in this inscription, says, 'The mention of the last named people at this time is extremely remarkable, for it appears to prove that at this time the Hittites were close to Egypt.*' And this view is supported by Mariette Bey's theory, that one of the Hyksos dynasties was Hittite.

The story as told in Genesis is true in all the formal details which embellish the framework of a shrewd Oriental bargain. It is in accordance with all that we know of such nations as the Hittites to push out their surplus and enterprising population along the highways of their commerce. As Damascus

* Brugsch's Egypt, vol. ii. p. 405.

and Aleppo now encourage the Bedawin to encamp under their walls and exchange the produce of the desert for the produce of the settled populations, so a Hittite colony established at Hebron would in their own interest encourage the great nomadic chieftain Abraham, with his surplus lambs, wool, and cheese, to linger in their neighbourhood, and purchase the produce of the looms of Egypt and the workshops of Phœnicia. And it is quite in accordance with the known instincts of such a colony to sell as a favour for a large sum a useless field with a useless cave.* We think the accuracy of the Bible has never been challenged on more frivolous grounds. The argument that because the Hittites in northern Syria were often at war, therefore a Hittite colony in southern Palestine was not likely to be engaged in a peaceful transaction, does not rest on a profound view of things. We think rather that the Hittites could never have sustained the shocks of Babylon, Egypt, and Assyria for a thousand years if they had not been patient and peaceful in times of peace as well as skilful and valiant in the time of war.

In the Book of Exodus the Hittites have grown in importance. The promised land is described by an enumeration of the peoples who inhabit it, and the Hittites, who are never absent from that enumeration, occupy the place of distinction (Exod. iii. 8, 17; xiii. 5; xxiii. 23, 28).

What testimony do the Egyptian hieroglyphics bear to this growth of Hittite power?

Thothmes III., the Egyptian Alexander, began his splendid reign of over half a century in 1600 B.C. According to Usher, this would be six years after Jacob went down into Egypt, and thirty-five years before the death of Joseph. The hieroglyphics of Thothmes are numerous and important. They have been read by Dr. Birch, Prof. Ebers, M. de Rougé, Mariette Bey, and others, and they recount numerous campaigns undertaken by Egypt in which the Hittites play an important part. In the Egyptian hieroglyphics the Hittites occupy exactly the same position as is assigned to them in the Book of Exodus. They are first in order and first in importance among the peoples of the promised land.†

* The Rev. Dr. Thomson, who lived nearly half a century amidst the scenes and scenery described in the new edition of his 'Land and the Book,' shows that every item of this transaction between Abraham and the Sons of Heth is in strict accordance with unchanged Oriental ways. 'In fact,' he adds, 'up to this present day, in this very city of Hebron, a purchase thus witnessed is legal; while the best drawn deeds of a modern lawyer, though signed, sealed, and attested would be of no avail without such living witnesses' (p. 249).

† Professor Rawlinson, in his 'History of Ancient Egypt,' vol. i. p. 111, referring to the enemies of Egypt in Syria and Palestine, says, 'the most important tribes were those of the Khita (Children of Heth or Hittites).'

There still stands at Karnak the splendid temple known as 'the Hall of Pillars,' erected by Thothmes III., in which Egyptian art reached its highest point. The walls and pillars are covered by pictures and names of the peoples and places which he had conquered. A few years ago the sand was removed from the wall of a lower story, and revealed a catalogue of 119 conquered places. The first place mentioned on this list is Kadesh on the Orontes, the capital of the Hittites. Brugsch Bey in referring to this list of names says—

What gives its highest value to this catalogue is the indisputable fact that, more than three hundred years before the entrance of the Israelites into the land of Canaan, a great confederacy of tribes of a common race existed in Palestine under petty kings, who dwelt in the very same towns and fortresses which for the most part, in later times, fell by conquest into the hands of the Jewish immigrants. Among them the king of Kadesh on the Orontes, in the land of the Amorites, as the inscriptions expressly testify, played the first part; for the kings and their peoples, from the water of Egypt to the land of Naharain, obeyed him as their chief leader.*

During the sojourn of Israel in Egypt, the Bible references not only show the Hittites growing in power, but they point to that power becoming localized more and more in the north. The Hittites, whom we first meet at important stations on the way to Egypt, such as Hebron and Beersheba, become the great northern people: 'From the wilderness and this Lebanon even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun' (Josh. i. 4).

Do the inscriptions give any countenance to this Bible representation of the Hittites? The Egyptian hieroglyphics and Assyrian inscriptions confirm this Bible reference fully and irresistibly.

Thothmes III. first encounters the king of the Hittites at Megiddo in Palestine. Ample details of the march and the battle are given. The king marched out of Egypt to meet the confederacy under the king of the Hittites. He passed through Gaza, 'full of power to conquer the miserable enemy, and to extend the boundaries of Egypt.' At Ithm he held a council of war, and addressed his followers in a speech preserved on the temple of Karnak.

'That hostile king of Kadesh (king of the Hittites) has arrived. He has entered into Megiddo. He has assembled with him the kings of the tribes over against the water of Egypt, as far as the land of Naharain (Mesopotamia).' †

In the battle the Egyptian king fought in a copper chariot.

* Brugsch's Egypt, vol. i. p. 394.

† Ibid. vol. i. p. 369.

He was like Hor the Smiter. 'The enemy fled head over heels to Megiddo, and left behind them their horses, and their gold and silver chariots, and were drawn up by their clothes, as by ropes, into that town . . . for the miserable king of Kadesh (king of the Hittites) had gone up together with the miserable king of that town. The enemy lay kicking in heaps like fishes on the ground.' *

In his subsequent campaigns Thothmes III. encounters the Hittites in the neighbourhood of Kadesh on the Orontes, between the river Euphrates and the Great Sea. He had followed them up to the centre of their power.

The Hittites continued to grow in power in that region, and in the time of Seti I. and Ramses II. they had become formidable adversaries of the power of Egypt. Brugsch Bey says, 'At the commencement of the nineteenth dynasty, the power of the Khita (whom he recognizes as the Hittites) had been extended over the whole of the surrounding nations. Their importance grew from year to year in such a way that even the Egyptian inscriptions do not hesitate to mention the names of the kings of the Khita in a conspicuous manner, and to speak of their gods with reverence.' †

Ramses I., B.C. *cir.* 1400, had been engaged in war with the Hittites, and had concluded a treaty of peace with Saplel their king. The treaty had been broken by the Hittites, and Seti I., successor of Ramses, marched northward with a mighty army. His march and victories are traced in inscriptions and pictures on the north wall of the great national temple at Karnak. He first overthrows the encroaching Bedawin in Southern Palestine, and then the Bedawin and Phœnicians in Southern Phœnicia, where 'Pharaoh annihilated the kings of the land of the Phœnicians.' Then the people of Central Canaan, and, finally, as the avenger of broken treaties, he falls on Kadesh. The Hittites were taken unawares, which shows that they had withdrawn from their southern allies to the north, and after a gallant resistance, they succumb to the onslaught of the Egyptians. In the words of the inscription, 'Seti has struck down the Asiatics, he has thrown to the ground the Khita; he has slain their princes.' A peace was concluded with the Hittites, &c. 'He returns home in triumph, he has annihilated the people, he has struck to the ground the Khita. He has made an end of his adversaries. The enmity of all people is turned into friendship.' ‡

* Brugsch's Egypt, vol. i. p. 372; and Dr. Birch in Records of the Past, vol. ii. p. 38.

† Brugsch's Egypt, vol. ii. p. 3.

‡ Ibid. vol. ii. p. 17.

Ramses II. the Conqueror, the Sesostris of the Greek historians, succeeded, and in his day the Hittites probably reached the zenith of their power.

In his fifth year he marched forth against the Hittites, between whom and the Egyptians war had again broken out.

We possess very complete records of this campaign. Painters and sculptors have exaggerated every detail, and the poet Pentaur, who accompanied the king, sings his praises in a heroic poem, which not only adorns the walls of the temples of Abydos, Luksor, Karnak, and the Ramesseum at Ibsamboul, but has come down to us on a roll of papyrus now in the British Museum, the oldest heroic song in the world.

On the testimony of prose and poetry, of picture and papyrus, the king was triumphantly victorious.

According to the Theban poet,

The king of the hostile Khita had assembled with him all the people from the uttermost ends of the sea to the people of the Khita. They had arrived in great numbers—the people of Naharain, the people of Arathu, of the Dardani,* the Masu, the Pidasa, the Malunna, the Karkish, the Leka, Qazuadana, Kirkamish, Akarith, Kati, the whole people of Anaugas every one of them, Mushanath and Kadesh. He had left no people on his road without bringing them with him. Their number was endless. Nothing like it had ever been before. They covered mountains and valleys like grasshoppers for their number. He had not left silver nor gold with his people; he had taken away all their goods and possessions to give it to the people who accompanied him in war.†

Such was the host of the Hittites assembled at Kadesh. Pharaoh hearing from Arab spies that the king of the Hittites was at Khilibu, approached Kadesh on the north-west. Suddenly he finds that the Hittites, who had been in ambush, are issuing forth to attack him, 'and Pharaoh called together all the chief men of his warriors. Behold, they were at the lake of the land of the Amorites.' ‡

Then the king arose, like his father Month; he grasped his weapon, and put on his armour, just like Baal in his time. And the noble pair of horses which carried Pharaoh, and whose name was 'Victory in Thebes,' they were from the court of King Ramses Miamun. When the king had quickened his course he rushed into the midst of the hostile hosts of Khita all alone, no other was with him. When Pharaoh had done this he looked behind him, and found himself surrounded by 2500 pairs of horses, and his retreat was beset by the bravest heroes of the king of the miserable Khita, and by all the numerous people that were with him, of Arathu, of Masu, of Pidasa, of Keshkesh, of Malunna, of Qazuadana, of

* M. De Rougé thought he recognized in this list, the Dardani of Asia Minor, the Mysians, the Lysians, &c.

† Brugsch's Egypt, vol. ii. p. 57.

‡ Poem of Pentaur, Brugsch's Egypt, vol. ii. p. 57.

Khilibu, of Akerith, of Kadesh, and of Leka. And there were three men on each chariot, and they were all gathered together. And not one of my princes, not one of my captains of the chariots, not one of my chief men, not one of my knights was there. My warriors and my chariots had abandoned me, not one of them was there to take part in the battle.*

In his straits Pharaoh addressed himself in a long prayer to the god Amon, recounting the temples and altars and offerings which he had dedicated to him. The god Amon, under a sense of gratitude, replied promising aid, and declaring himself 'worth more than hundreds of thousands united in one place.' The king thus encouraged fell single handed upon the whole army of the Hittites; but the heroics of Pentaur are so extravagant that we turn to the simple prose of a temple inscription.

He was alone. He rushed into the midst of the hostile hosts of the king of the Khita, and the much people that were with him. And Pharaoh, like the God Sutekh, the Glorious, cast them down and slew them. And I the king flung them down head over heels one after another into the water of the Orontes. I subdued all the people, and yet I was alone, for my warriors and my charioteers had left me in the lurch. None of them stood by me. Then the king of the Hittites raised his hands to pray before me. I swear it as truly as the sun-god loved me, as truly as my father the god Tum blesses me, that all the deeds which I the king have related, these I truly performed before my army and my charioteers.†

The Rev. T. K. Cheyne, who places the inscriptions of Egypt before the Bible records in veracity, receives as authentic this representation of the battle. 'Ramses,' he says, 'was indeed victorious, but he owed his life, and consequently his victory, to his personal bravery and, as Pentaur represents it, to his childish-like faith in his god.' I am inclined to agree with Brugsch Bey, 'that Ramses came out of the battle a doubtful conqueror.' And I am the more inclined to think so because an immediate peace followed the battle, and the borders of the Hittites were spared. Besides, we do not find any enumeration of booty such as followed other conquests, and some years after the battle an offensive and defensive alliance, with extradition clauses, was drawn up between Khitasir, the great king of the Hittites, and the prince of Egypt in terms of perfect equality,‡

* Poem of Pentaur.

† Brugsch's Egypt, vol. ii. p. 54.

‡ The inscription relating to this treaty was translated by Mr. C. W. Goodwin ('Records of the Past,' vol. iv. p. 25), and is given in Brugsch's Egypt, vol. ii. p. 71. It is called 'offensive and defensive alliance between Khita and Kemi.' The Hittite stands before the Egyptian. 'This is the copy of the contents of the silver tablet, which the great King of Khita, Khitasir, had caused to be made, and which was presented to the Pharaoh, &c. . . . The treaty which had been prepared by the great King of Khita, Khitasir, the powerful, the son of Maro-sir, the great King of Khita, &c., to Ramessu Miamun, the great Prince of Egypt,' &c.

and not as between the subduer and subdued. And a memorial tablet in the temple of Ibsamboul declares that the Egyptian married the daughter of the king of the Hittites, and that the prince of Khita, clad in the dress of his country, conducted his daughter as a bride to his son-in-law.*

We have thus brought the light of the Egyptian inscriptions to bear upon the Bible references to the Hittites, both as regards their gradual withdrawal from the south and the greatness of their power in the north, and in both cases the ample records of Egypt more than confirm the sacred narrative. And even in the willingness of the Hittites to provide wives for the Hebrew chiefs and kings we see a parallel in the court of Egypt.

The promise to the Israelites to send hornets before them to drive out the Hittites (Deut. vii. 20; Josh. xxiv. 12; Exod. xxiii. 28)† seems to have been largely fulfilled by the devastating border wars between the Pharaohs and the people of Southern Palestine, who were always the first to feel the shock of the Egyptian arms. We can trace the march of Seti I., on his first campaign, from Khetam, the Etham of the Bible (Numb. xxxiii. 6), past Rehoboth, south of Beersheba, to the fortress of Kan'aaan which he stormed, and became subduer of the whole of Edomitish Negeb. On the northern side of the great temple of Karnak this conquest is recorded thus: 'In the first year of King Seti, there took place by the strong arm of Pharaoh the annihilation of the hostile Shasu, from the fortress of Khetam, of the land of Zalu as far as Kan'aaan; the king was against them like a fierce lion. They were turned into a heap of corpses. They lay there in blood.'‡

In such fierce border encounters the hand of Pharaoh would press heavy on any Hittite colonies as being advanced branches of the great national enemy. Hence Joshua found the Anakim at Hebron, and the spies found the Amalekites dwelling in the south, and the Hittites driven back to the mountains (Numb. xiii. 29).§

On their entrance into the promised land the Israelites

* 'The subsequent battles, and the treaty of Ramses II. with the Khita, prove how slight were the successes so highly extolled in the inscriptions.' Professor Max Duncker's *History of Antiquity*, vol. i. p. 155.

† The Speaker's Commentary, referring to Exodus xxiii. 28, says, 'There seems to be no reasonable doubt that the word is used figuratively for a cause of terror and discouragement.'

‡ Brugsch's *Egypt*, vol. ii. p. 14.

§ Professor Max Duncker represents the Amorites as driving the Hittites northward about the middle of the thirteenth century B.C.: 'The Amorites pressed forward against the Hittites, and took possession of their land as far as lake Merom' (*Hist. Antiq.* vol. i. p. 349).

encountered the Hittites and the other hill tribes; and no doubt the Hittites, as being skilful and valiant warriors, directed the less disciplined hosts of the land. The great northern people, who had secured peace with the Pharaohs, would doubtless give a helping hand to stem the tide of invasion (Josh. ix. 1). And hence we find that the kings in the hills, and in the valleys, and in all the coasts of the great sea over against Lebanon; the Hittite, and the Amorite, and other tribes gathered themselves together to fight with Joshua and with Israel with one accord.

At Jericho and Ai (Josh. xxiv. 11) Joshua seems to have overcome the opposition in detail. But King Jabin seeing the approaching danger, sent far and near to all the kings and peoples of the land (Josh. xi. 1). The common danger drew the people together from north of Hermon and Lebanon, and south of Chinnereth, and from the Phœnician coast, and they assembled by the lake Huleh on the upper Jordan. 'Much people, even as the sand that is upon the sea-shore in multitude, with horses and chariots very many.'

It was the supreme and united effort of the doomed people. They were there in their strength, the disciplined hosts of the Hittites. In the Egyptian hieroglyphics the well-ordered armies of the Hittites form a striking contrast to the Canaanitish crowd. The beardless light-red Hittites, on horse and foot, march in battle array with well-drilled precision; but they were specially distinguished by their chariots, each of which carried three warriors. In the battle-song of Pentaur, Ramses II., whom Brugsch Bey considers the oppressor of Israel,* seems to have taken little note of any branch of the Hittite army except that of the chariots. Twice he refers to the 2500 pairs of horses by which Pharaoh was surrounded: 'they stood three men on each chariot, and they were assembled in one spot the best heroes of the army of Khita, well appointed with all weapons for the fight.' Such was the army of the Hittites which secured from the proudest and most boastful of the Pharaohs a formal treaty and dynastic alliance. Such the chisel of the sculptor and the brush of the painter portrayed them on abiding stone, and such was the chief force of that mighty host by the waters of Merom on which Joshua fell suddenly, and by a great overthrow became possessor of the land of promise from Mount Halak on the south to Baal-gad on the north (Josh. xi. 17). We recognize

* Brugsch's *Egypt*, vol. ii. p. 103. 'Ramses II. is the Pharaoh of the oppression, and the father of that unnamed princess, who found the child Moses exposed in the bulrushes on the bank of the river.'

in the Hittites by the Huleh lake the same people who fought with Ramses by the water of Kadesh, and whose pictures still adorn the temples of Egypt.

During the long reign of Ramses II., the treaty of peace seems to have been observed between the Egyptians and the Hittites, and we find his successor, Mineptah II., whom Brugsch Bey considers the Pharaoh of the Exodus, actually supplying 'wheat in ships, to preserve the lives of the people of Khita.'* Later we meet the Hittites among the enemies of Egypt, and Ramses III. again carried the Egyptian arms as far as the northern capital of the Khita. Referring to a hostile movement against Egypt, the inscription declares of the invaders, 'they came leaping from their coasts and islands, and spread themselves all over the lands. No people stood before their arms, beginning with the people of Khita.'† Ramses III. was victorious over these enemies of Egypt, and in his palace at Medinet Abou he caused to be sculptured portraits of kings and leaders whom he had subdued, and among these there is one whom the accompanying inscription calls, 'The miserable King of Khita taken alive.'‡ Pharaoh not only subdued the Hittites, but he returned laden with spoil and accompanied with a Hittite princess. §

In the Bible, also, we have frequent reference to individual Hittites. Two of King David's most faithful warriors were Hittites—Ahimelech (1 Sam. xxvi. 6) and Uriah the Hittite (2 Sam. xi. 21)—and we see King David and King Solomon, like Ramses II. and III., allying themselves with Hittite wives (1 Kings xi. 1). We also see King David pushing his conquests and consolidating his empire among the towns of the Hittites. And King Solomon, like Mineptah II., appears to have supplied the Hittites with the commodities which they needed (1 Kings x. 29).

Thus we find that even obscure and incidental reference to the Hittites in the Bible have their counterpart in the stony handwriting of Egypt.

In connection with the siege of Samaria, as recorded in 2 Kings vii., we have an important reference to the Hittites. The Israelites under Jehoram son of Ahab were hard pressed in their capital by the army of Benhadad of Damascus. The besieged were in sore straits, and must soon have surrendered or perished. Then, according to Elisha's prophecy, deliver-

* Brugsch's Egypt, vol. ii. p. 124. My friend, Dr. Delitzsch, who has kindly read the *revise* of this essay, reminds me that the son of Ramses II., 'Mer-neptah (beloved of Ptah), is the Pharaoh of the Exodus, according to Lepsius, Ebers, and almost all Egyptologists.'

† Brugsch's Egypt, vol. ii. p. 154. ‡ Ibid. vol. ii. p. 158. § Ibid. vol. ii. p. 173.

ance came (ver. 6): 'For the Lord had made the host of the Syrians to hear a noise of chariots, and a noise of horses, even the noise of a great host: and they said one to another, Lo, the king of Israel hath hired against us the kings of the Hittites, and the kings of the Egyptians, to come upon us. Wherefore they arose and fled in the twilight, and left their tents, and their horses, and their asses, even the camp as it was, and fled for their lives' (2 Kings vii. 6, 7).

Prof. Newman, in speaking of this narrative, says, 'The unhistorical tone is too manifest to allow of our easy belief in it.' He thinks 'there was a real event at bottom,' for Xenophon in his *Anabasis* speaks of dangerous night panics in the Greek and Persian hosts, and therefore the Syrian army may have fled in a sudden panic. 'But,' he adds of the Bible account, 'the particular ground of alarm attributed to them does not exhibit the writer's acquaintance with the times in very favourable light.' 'No Hittite kings can have compared in power with the king of Judah, the real and near ally, who is not named at all.'* 'Nor is there a single mark of acquaintance with the contemporaneous history.'

Prof. W. F. Newman casts discredit on the incident because he thinks the Hittites were too insignificant to have caused alarm to the Syrian hosts. Let us see what light the inscriptions throw on this point. We have seen the important position occupied by the Hittites in the Egyptian inscriptions, let us now turn to the rising power of Assyria, and examine their records, that we may learn from contemporary documents the position of the Hittites at the period referred to. According to Professor Sayce, the empire of Naharaim had been replaced by that of the Hittite about the period of the nineteenth Dynasty, and he adds, 'when we come to the era of Tiglath-Pileser I. B.C. 1130, the Hittites are still paramount from the Euphrates to Lebanon.† This king of Assyria undertook several campaigns against the Hittites which remained without results. Duncker declares that the position which Tiglath-Pileser had won on the Euphrates was not maintained by his successors in any one instance.‡

Usher places the siege of Samaria about 892 B.C., and Assyriologists agree in fixing the reign of Assur-Nasir-Pal about 883-858 B.C. Of this monarch, who added new vigour to the wars against the people of Northern Syria, there are very ample records. An inscription, discovered in the ruins

* 'History of the Hebrew Monarchy,' pp. 173, 179.

† Transactions of the Bib. Arch. Soc., vol. v. p. 28.

‡ 'Hist. Antiq.' vol. ii. p. 308.

of a temple near the pyramid at Nimroud, was published among the 'Cuneiform Inscriptions of Western Asia,'* and a translation by the Rev. J. M. Rodwell is printed in 'Records of the Past.'† From this inscription Assur-Nasir-Pal appears to have carried the Assyrian arms not only to Carchemish and Lebanon, but as far as Tyre and Sidon. 'Ahiramu, son of Yahiru, son of Bahiani of the land of the Hittites' was then at the head of the Hittites, a term, according to Mr. Rodwell, used in a large sense at that time, as including the inhabitants of Northern Palestine. At this period the Hittites are still a strong people, especially are they formidable on account of the chariots, the dread of which struck terror into the hearts of the hosts which were besieging Samaria.

Assur-Nasir-Pal levied tribute on the conquered Hittites. 'To Carchemish in Syria I directed my steps. The tribute due from the son of Bahiani, swift chariots, horses, silver, tin, copper, khami of copper I received. The chariots and warlike engines of the officer of the son of Bahiani I added to my magazines.'‡

The inscriptions here refer to the chariots of the Hittites before even referring to their gold and silver. Farther on in the inscription he refers again and again to the Hittite chariots. 'The chariots and warlike engines of the general of Carchemish I laid up in my magazines.'

He passed from Carchemish 'to Hazazi, the town of Lubarna of the Khatti,' and levied tribute. Then he proceeded to the royal city Kanulua of the Hittites, and imposed upon the chief or king a tribute of an enormous quantity of precious metals and stones and cattle; and he adds, 'the chariots and warlike engines of the land of the Khatti I laid up in magazines. Their hostages I took.'§ Again he marched to the fortified city belonging to Lubarna of the land of the Khatti.||

From these inscriptions, then, it is clear that about the time of the siege of Samaria the Hittites were still a mighty people, spread over the north of Syria from Carchemish to Lebanon, that they had numerous chieftains or kings, who ruled over independent districts or strongholds, and that as

* 'Hist. Antiq.' vol. i., plates 17-27.

† Vol. iii. p. 37.

‡ 'Records of the Past,' vol. iii. p. 7.

§ Ibid. pp. 72, 73.

|| Professor Max Duncker, after reviewing these campaigns, adds, 'According to the evidence of the inscriptions, Assur-Nasir-Pal established the supremacy of Assyria in the region of the sources of the Tigris; but even he does not seem to have gone much farther than Tiglath-Pileser before him' ('Hist. Antiq.' vol. ii. p. 310).

in the days of Ramses II., so in the time of the siege of Samaria, the Hittite chiefs were distinguished among the nations for 'their swift chariots, their horses, and their engines of war.' We are thus led to the conclusion that the sacred writer was thoroughly acquainted with the times in which he wrote, and with the facts which he narrated, and that it is Professor Newman's acquaintance with the times of which he writes that does not appear in a very favourable light.

The confirmation of the sacred narrative does not depend on the necessary accuracy of Biblical or Assyrian chronology, nor on mere isolated or obscure hints found in the cuneiform inscriptions. Nor can it be said that the power of the Hittites was broken before the siege of Samaria. The Assyrian records represent the Khatti as a martial people strong in war chariots, during a space which must of necessity have included the time when Samaria was besieged, whatever be the true period for that event in Biblical chronology. Shalmaneser, the son of Assur-Nasir-pal, who reigned for thirty-five years, the contemporary of Ahab, Jehu, and Hazael, set up a large stone at Kurkh, on the river Tigris, covered with a long inscription. The stone is now in the British Museum, and the whole inscription has been translated by Professor Sayce. This inscription represents the Hittites of Carchemish marshalling 'with others for battle.' 'With them I fought,' says Shalmaneser. 'Their corpses like chaff through the country I scattered. Multitudes of chariots and horses trained to the yoke I seized.*' Again, he says he approached Carchemish, and the kings of the country fled at the sight of his weapons. Farther on he records that he passed through a city 'which the men of the Hittites the city of Pethor have called,' and from Hamath, a town of the Hittites, he carried away seven hundred war chariots and seven hundred magazines. The inscription ends with a reference to the Hittite chariots: 'The river Orontes I reached. Their chariots, their magazines, and their horses trained to the yoke I took away from them.†'

In the British Museum there is another important inscription of the same king, inscribed on what is known as the Black Obelisk. It was found by Mr. Layard in the mound at Nimroud, and was one of the first read by Rawlinson and Hinks. The very language of this inscription is strikingly in accord with the language of the Bible. 'The Euphrates in its flood I crossed. The city of Dabigu, a choice city of the

* 'Records of the Past,' vol. iii. p. 88.

† Ibid. pp. 99, 100.

Hittites, together with the cities which were dependent on it I captured.' Then he refers to a city on the further side of the Euphrates, upon the river 'Sagurni, which the kings of the Hittites call Pitra for myself I took.' 'The Euphrates in its upper part I crossed. The tribute of the kings of the Hittites all of them I received. . . . Their chariots, their war carriages, their war material I took from them.'* Ceaseless wars seem, from this inscription, to have been waged by Assyria against the Hittites and their neighbours. 'In my eleventh year, for the ninth time, the Euphrates I crossed. Cities to a countless number I captured. To the cities of the Hittites of the Hamathites I went down. Eighty-nine cities I took. Rimmon Idri of Damascus, and twelve of the kings of the Hittites.' 'The tribute of the kings of the Hittites all of them I received.'† Duncker says he 'crossed the Euphrates for the twenty-first time,' but he does not say he reduced them. He only asserts that he received tribute of Tyre, Sidon, and Byblus, and then assures us, quite briefly, in the account of his twenty-fifth campaign (835 B.C.), that he received 'the tribute of all the princes of Syria of the land of the Khatti.'‡

Shalmaneser died in 823 B.C., but the wars between the Assyrians and the Hittites seem to have been carried on to the time of Sargon. In the annals of Sargon, translated by Dr. Julius Oppert, we find two facts with important bearings on our argument recorded. 'In the beginning of my reign,' says Sargon (B.C. 721), 'with the help of the Sun, who aided me to vanquish my enemies, I besieged, I occupied the town of Samaria, and I brought into captivity 27,800 persons.' Four years later, in 717 B.C., Sargon finally overthrew the Hittite kingdom by the defeat of Pisiri, and the capture of Carchemish. 'In the fifth year of my reign, Pisiri of Carchemish sinned against the gods.'§ In the sequel, the Hittites were carried into captivity, and Assyrians were placed in their cities.

Thus the Hittites, who appear for the first time in the inscriptions|| of Sargon I., king of Aganè, ¶ *cir.* 1900 B.C., disappear from history in the inscriptions of Sargon B.C. 717.

* 'Records of the Past,' vol. v. pp. 32, 33.

† Ibid. vol. v. pp. 34-36.

‡ 'Hist. Antiq.' vol. ii. p. 319. See also Rawlinson, 'Ancient Monarchies,' vol. ii. p. 363.

§ 'Records of the Past,' vol. vii. pp. 28-30.

|| The late George Smith surmises that we owe the preservation of the inscriptions of Sargon I. to Sargon king of Assyria, who named himself after the earlier monarch ('Records of the Past,' vol. v. p. 57).

¶ Dr. Delitzsch tells me this word should be written *Agade*. In the unsettled orthography of such words I have followed the authors who are my authorities.

They were a people before Abraham went forth from Ur of the Chaldees, and they only yielded to the arms of Assyria after the Israelites had been swept from Samaria. During the history of the chosen people, from the time of Abraham to the captivity, the Hittites are often referred to in the Bible. These references have been discredited by professed assailants and by weak apologists of the Bible. We have examined the contemporary records of Babylon, Assyria, and Egypt, and we find not only collateral evidence, which creates a probability in favour of the authenticity of the sacred narrative, but side lights, which shine so clearly on the incidents that unbelief is impossible. *

III. HAVE THE HITTITES LEFT US ANY RECORDS OF THEMSELVES ?

I believe they have, but as yet they speak to us in a tongue that we do not understand. The inscribed stones of Hamath were four in number, but as one large stone had five lines on the side and four on the end, the inscriptions may be reckoned as five. The stones were close, compact basalt, and the characters in the inscriptions were raised, not incised, on well-smoothed surfaces, and the lines, which consist of rows of characters two or three deep, were clearly defined by raised bars, which served as borders. The stones were undressed at the base, and were doubtless built into the walls of some public structure, with the smooth and inscribed parts out. They were removed to the museum at Constantinople as soon as I had taken casts of the inscriptions. Three inscribed stones have since reached the British Museum from Jerabis, the site of the ancient Carchemish, and defaced inscriptions in the same character have been found at Aleppo and Ibreez. Mr. Ramsay is making important discoveries in Asia Minor, and the Rev. Henry Marden has found inscriptions of similar character on the sculptured lions on the corner of the castle of Marash. There are besides these a few clay seals of the same character, found by Mr. Layard in Sennacherib's palace; and Professor Sayce considers that he has identified monuments of the Hittites westward through Asia Minor almost as far as the Ægean Sea.

* 'The veracity of the Old Testament account of the Hittite princes contemporary with Solomon had been deemed as presenting insuperable difficulties, but the indisputable testimony of the granite records of Thothmes and Rameses has left no doubt as to the contemporary rule of this powerful race in Northern Syria in the times of the Hebrew Judges and Kings' (Lieutenant Conder, 'Quarterly Statement of Palestine Exploration Fund,' January, 1881).

My theory that these inscriptions were Hittite remains has* so grown in favour during the past nine years that Professor Sayce, a high authority on all such subjects, declares 'the Hittite origin of the peculiar system of writing first noticed by modern travellers on the site of Hamath to be among the ascertained facts of science.'† I fear science cannot yet assume such a responsibility. Science permits an hypothesis, but insists that it remain a hypothesis until proved. As yet not one character, word, or syllable of the inscriptions has been with certainty deciphered, and hence my suggestion is still a hypothesis.

That the Hamath inscriptions, and others of similar character since discovered, are Hittite remains appears exceedingly probable, from the consideration first of all that none of the other theories advanced as to their origin seem satisfactory.

At first, as Mr. Hyde Clarke said, 'they were pronounced by men of high authority not to be inscriptions at all, but vagaries of ornamentation.'‡ But a glance at the sharply cut figures showed that they were in great part ideographic, and more closely resembling phonetic writing than the hieroglyphics of Egypt. Comparisons show that the characters resemble the Cypriote syllabary, to which they doubtless stand in parental relation. The discovery of additional inscriptions of the same kind has removed all doubt.

Captain Burton thought the key to the inscriptions was to be found in the Bedawi tribe-marks. 'I would suggest,' he says, 'that the most feasible way of deciphering them would be by comparing them with the *Wusum* of the several Bedawi families, tribes, and clans.'§ But the location of these inscriptions in a great city, far from Bedawi influence, and the neat appearance and good finish of the characters, show that they were executed by a settled people, with good instruments, and that they are not likely to have any affinity to the scratchy tribe-marks of the Bedawin.

Mr. Hyde Clarke considered the inscriptions allied with the Himyaritic, and through it with the Libyan. 'We obtain,' he says, 'out of the Hamath characters at least sixteen identifications of form with the Himyaritic and Libyan, leaving no reasonable doubt that the Hamath characters are partly related to one alphabet, in its origin allied to another.'||

* Lieutenant Conder says: 'The suggestion that the Hamath stones were of Hittite origin was first put forward in 1873 by the Rev. W. Wright, of Damascus, and it is now generally admitted on the authority of Professor Sayce' (Quarterly Statement of Palestine Exploration Fund, July 1881).

† 'Transactions of the Biblical Archaeological Society,' vol. vii. part 2.

‡ 'Unexplored Syria,' vol. i. p. 349.

§ Ibid. vol. i. p. 341.

|| Ibid. vol. i. p. 354.

The geographical position of the Himyarites, as well as their position in history, make it impossible to accept this theory. Mr. H. Clarke takes strange liberties with the history of the Himyarites in favour of his views. He says, 'as to the age of the inscriptions, they can hardly be lower than the latest date assigned to the Himyaritic, namely, 100 of the common era, but they may be as old as the oldest Himyaritic are supposed to be, 600 before the common era.'* So far from these being the assigned dates to the Himyarites, M. Caussin places the foundation of the Himyaritic kingdom one century before our era; and M. Renan declares, 'La date des inscriptions Himyarites semble être le 3^{me} et le 4^{me} siècle après Jésus Christ.'† Gesenius also fixes the date of the Himyaritic inscriptions in the fourth century of the Christian era, a period very remote from the time when the inscribed clay seals found by Layard were used in Sennacherib's palace.

The location of the Hittites is equally unfavourable to Mr. H. Clarke's theory.

According to Abu el Fida, the great Arab historian of Hamath, 'Himyar was the son of Saba, who built the city Ma'rib, and the famous Ma'rib dyke, into which flowed seventy rivers, and the sons of Himyar were the kings of Yemen.'‡ The Himyaritic as a written language seems to have had its earliest home in Yemen, and M. Renan says, 'it still exists as a living dialect in the adjacent regions, under the name Akhkili.'§ There is no proof that the Himyaritic ever existed in any force far from the shores of the Red Sea. It is clear, then, both as regards space and time, that the Himyaritic lies outside the circle of kinship with the Hamathite; and what is true of the Himyaritic is still more true of the Libyan, which Mr. H. Clarke supposed to be related to the Hamath inscriptions. In 1877 Mr. H. Clarke published a pamphlet setting forth a Khita-Peruvian theory. The pamphlet shows wide research, but the central hypothesis requires support.

The theories that would connect the inscriptions with the Aztec and Georgian are so devoid of plausibility that we need not consider them.

Mr. J. A. Johnson, in drawing attention to the inscriptions in the 'First Statement of the American Palestine Exploration Society,'|| suggested that they were the work of Assyrians, or Egyptians, or Hebrews. 'We should naturally,' he says, 'expect to find in this vicinity some trace of the Assyrian and

* 'Unexplored Syria,' vol. i. p. 359. † 'Langues Sémitiques,' p. 315.

‡ Abu el Fida, vol. i. p. 105. Ed. Constantinople, A. H. 1286.

§ 'Langues Sémitiques,' p. 303.

|| July, 1871.

Egyptian conquerors, who ravaged the valley of the Orontes, and of their struggles with the Hittites on this ancient field, and of Solomon who built stone cities in Hamath. The arrow-headed characters are suggestive of Assur-Nasir-Pal.' Perhaps it is sufficient to state at once that these inscriptions are neither Egyptian, nor Assyrian, nor Hebrew. The busts and birds and feet and animals' heads, and other symbolic forms in the inscriptions, are suggestive of the hieroglyphics, while the spear-heads have a resemblance to the cuneiform, but Assyriologists and Egyptologists are agreed that the Hamath inscriptions are neither Assyrian nor Egyptian.

Is it not more natural to suppose that the inscriptions are not monuments of the invaders, who boasted so often that they had 'utterly destroyed the Hittites,' but rather that they are the records of that great Hittite people themselves, who for more than a thousand years held their own against the might of Assyria and Egypt? We have seen that the Egyptians inscribed the records of their victories over the Hittites very copiously on their temples, and that the Assyrians minutely chronicled on stones and bricks their triumphs in the same region; but we cannot reasonably conclude from this that therefore they wrote them up in the streets of Hamath and Carchemish for the edification of the vanquished Hittites.

The inscribed Hamath stones, as we have seen, were dressed narrow towards the parts on which the inscriptions were carved, and the bases were undressed for several feet. The stones were built into walls, with the dressed and inscribed parts standing out. They were intended to be publicly read, and were doubtless in the vernacular of the people.

Nor is it at all likely that the Hittites would live surrounded by such literary nations as the Egyptians, the Assyrians, the Jews, and the Phœnicians, occupying so large a place in their estimation, and maintaining their ground so well in war and in peace, without having a literature of their own, or at least a written language. The relations of the Hittites with Assyria were very extensive. They seem to have been often in alliance with the Phœnicians, who were doubtless their carriers by sea. Hittite warriors were among King David's mighty men at the time he wrote his Psalms, and both he and Solomon extended Israelitish influence among the Hittites (2 Sam. viii. 10; 1 Kings xi. 1; 2 Chron. viii. 4). In addition to waging wars, and concluding treaties and forming dynastic alliances with the Egyptians, the Hittites had commercial transactions with them. When

Khita-sir went down into Egypt he would see on the great temples of the land the pictures and records of victories gained over his ancestors. Every Hittite who went down into Egypt for horses, or chariots, or fine linen, would see wherever he went abroad, pictures of the captive Khita accompanying the boastful Egyptian records, and it is impossible to conceive that anything but lack of a written language would prevent so patriotic a people as the Hittites from writing up their own achievements. But we know that the Hittites had a written language, and that the 'Offensive and Defensive Alliance between Khita and Kemi,' which Khita-sir took with him to Egypt, and the translation of which was inscribed on the temples, was written in the language of the Hittites on a silver tablet. There is even a contemptuous reference in one of the inscriptions to the literary propensities of the Hittites.*

From all the evidence before me, internal and external, I am led to conclude that the Hamath inscriptions are in the language of the inhabitants, by whom they were intended to be publicly read, and that these inhabitants were the Khita or Hittites. Had they been inscribed by the invaders who so often ravaged the Orontes valley they would doubtless have been destroyed as soon as the hereditary enemy turned his back.

We have thus tried to clear our way by showing what these inscriptions are not, and we believe we have pointed out what they probably are. Up to the present time we have known the Hittites only on the testimony of their neighbours and rivals. In these inscriptions the Hittites, I believe, speak for themselves, and they have doubtless something in return to say of their neighbours. We await their story with intense impatience. Other similar inscriptions besides those of Hamath are being brought to light, and many more await the careful explorer in the land where the spoiler has been at work for so many years. We have full confidence that the inscriptions will not long remain mute. When they do speak they may simply duplicate the Egyptian and Assyrian records of bloodshedding. But we may have some additional confirmation of Bible story: of Joshua's wondrous conquest by

* Professor Sayce says, 'The Egyptian monuments make mention of a certain Kirab-Sar, writer of the books of the Miserable (king) of the Hittites,' and M. de Rougé reminds us that 'Hebron, the Hittite town of Palestine, once bore the name of Kirjath-Sepher, or 'City of Books,' a fact which seems to imply that the Semites of the West associated literature and the Hittite race together' (Trans. of the Bib. Arch. Soc., vol. v. p. 29). See also De Rougé's 'Mélanges d'Archéologie Egyptienne et Assyrienne,' vol. ii. p. 3.

the waters of Merom; of the relations of King David and King Toi (2 Sam. viii. 10); of Solomon's alliance with a Hittite wife; of his building stone cities in Hamath, &c. (2 Chron. viii. 4), and at least they will assist in restoring the Hittite kingdom to its position in history as one of the mightiest empires of the ancient world.*

We must, however, labour to unloose the dumb tongue of these inscriptions, and to unlock their mysteries, not with the view of finding something sensational in them, or for the purpose of advancing some theory, but from a pure love of knowing what they really contain; and I doubt not that, proceeding in the right method of investigation, we shall reach results satisfactory to the oriental scholar, and confirmatory of Divine truth.

* Mr. Cheyne closes his article with these words: 'If the Hittites be really the inventors of the Hamathite hieroglyphics, this wonderful nation steps into a position hardly surpassed by any of the nations of the distant East' (Encl. Brit., Art. 'Hittites').

